



## A Very Generous Birthday Celebration

**J**ane-Marie Terefencko, a Brunswick County resident, used her 70th birthday as an opportunity to give to others. She celebrated by asking her friends and family to support the Warm Homes, Warm Hearts utility assistance program. They rose to the challenge, raising an amazing \$13,215, which Brunswick Electric matched, providing \$26,430 to help those in need.

“We are blown away by the generosity of Jane-Marie, and her friends and family,” said Josh Winslow, CEO of Brunswick Electric. “Last year was a difficult one, with many of our neighbors experiencing hardship as a result of the pandemic. This contribution helps ensure that funding is available to those who need a helping hand.”

“Brunswick Family Assistance is so grateful to BEMC and our community for this vital program,” said Stephanie Bowen, Executive Director for Brunswick Family Assistance. “It is only with the help of community partners like BEMC and the love and generosity of people like Jane-Marie, who want to give back, that we can continue to provide the level of support needed in Brunswick County.”

Happy Birthday, and our hats are off to you Jane-Marie!



*Left to Right: John Terefencko; Jane-Marie Terefencko; Stephanie Bowen, Executive Director for Brunswick Family Assistance; and Brookes Versaggi, Manager of Communications and Member Engagement for Brunswick Electric.*

### Your Charitable Dollar Goes Twice as Far

Considering a way to give back to your community? Every dollar you donate to the Warm Homes, Warm Hearts year-round utility assistance program gets matched by BEMC, doubling the impact of your generosity - and 100% of donations reach our neighbors in need. The funds are administered by Brunswick Family Assistance and the Columbus County Department of Aging, which distribute them across our service area. Since the program's founding in 2008, well over \$1 million has been raised to help thousands of local families get through a rough time.



#### Donations can be made by mail to:

Warm Homes, Warm Hearts, PO Box 826, Shallotte, NC 28459. Please do not enclose the donation with your electric bill payment.



### Hot water money-saving tips

- **Turn down the temperature:** Factory settings for hot water systems are normally 130-140 degrees, which is hot enough to scald. Lowering it to a comfortable 120 degrees will save you at least 3-5% on your water heating costs.
- **Insulate:** For additional savings, insulate your water storage tank and exposed piping so hot water doesn't cool while going to its destination. Just be sure not to cover the thermostat or the tank's top or bottom, or burner for gas tanks.
- **Install a timer:** Standard tank water heaters are designed to keep a full tank of hot water ready at all times. Installing a timer that turns the system off overnight or while you're away can result in big savings.
- **Use less:** Install a low-flow showerhead, wash clothes in cold water, and use the energy efficiency setting on your dishwasher for a significant reduction in your water heating costs. You, your clothes and dishes will be just as clean.

# The Cooperative Business Model – the Best of Both Worlds



**Joshua L. Winslow**  
CEO/General  
Manager

**I**n the midst of a rapidly evolving energy landscape, National Co-op Month seems like a great time to emphasize how well and uniquely positioned we are to continue to add value to your membership. Technological advances with distributed resources, such as solar energy and battery storage, and demand response programs such as Time-of-Use rates and smart thermostats, are providing unprecedented ways for you to control how you consume energy. The cooperative model ensures that local priorities are at the forefront as we deploy these technologies, and that we achieve beneficial large-scale results through our statewide and national networks of electric co-ops.

We know that creating value starts with understanding what's important to you. No matter what's happening in other parts of the country, we are positioned to maximize industry advances based on local priorities. Because we know that cost matters in any kind of transition, we're being strategic in developing the most efficient and effective ways to facilitate the adoption of distributed resources.

Guided by these priorities, we're leveraging the collective power of our cooperative networks to make sure we're developing and offering you the best that technological advances have to offer. Just as North Carolina electric co-ops negotiate wholesale power purchases together for your benefit and are working together to make the



most efficient use of the entire system, we're collectively leveraging technology and scale to deploy demand response programs that will save you money. We also punch above our weight in employee training and education, and finance, through the strength of our statewide and national organizations.

It's also important to note during National Co-op Month the role that our employees have in achieving our

objectives. We're positioned well to act on local priorities, excel in delivering new programs and services, and maintain the reliability you count on, because of their expertise and dedication. We're attracting and developing top talent, and have some of the best in the industry working for you. Because cost matters, we're benchmarking internal efficiency against other co-ops, and our metrics are improving compared to our peers. It's our responsibility to be good stewards of your investment; we don't want to spend a cent more than we have to in achieving your

objectives.

The advantages of the co-op business model become even more distinct in times of rapid change and opportunity. Our actions are based on local priorities, yet we can leverage the strength and depth of our cooperative networks to deliver world-class results. It's the best of both worlds – it's the cooperative difference. Thank you for being a member.



This section of the newsletter is written by a BEMC employee or member of the executive team about a timely topic that affects you as a member of BEMC.

# Q&A on Cooperative Membership

October is National Co-op Month, and a good time to remember how the cooperative difference benefits our members.



## What is the purpose of an electric co-op?

An electric co-op is owned by the members it serves, and its purpose is to provide them with high-quality electric service at the lowest possible cost. This means that instead of sending profits to investors, investments are made in systems and infrastructure, leading to a more robust and resilient system and faster restoration times after weather events. It's why BEMC's reliability is so high. It also means that being a good steward of co-op finances is essential. Any revenue after expenses and planning for growth is returned to you when it is prudent to do so (see "Capital Credits" below).

## How is an electric co-op governed and managed?

Members elect the Board of Directors from the membership. The Board oversees policy and planning, and hires the CEO, who is responsible for operations. Co-op employees understand that they work for you. It's a culture that can be very different than for-profit companies. That's why our MSR's that answer your calls go the extra mile to help you, why our line crews' sense of urgency is so strong during outages, and why our

management team strives for new ways to improve service and reduce cost.

## How does an electric co-op impact the communities it serves?

Working to better the communities we serve is woven into the cooperative culture. Electric co-ops were formed by members to improve the quality of life for each other. In that spirit, Brunswick Electric has initiated a variety of economic development efforts, and created grant programs that assist local non-profits, civic groups, and teachers. We offer college scholarships, sponsor a utility assistance program, and offer low-interest energy efficiency loans.

## Do electric co-ops collaborate?

We have reciprocal arrangements with electric co-ops across the state and country that come to our aid when severe weather strikes, just as we assist them when they need help. North Carolina electric co-ops use our collective strength in negotiating wholesale power purchases, and collaborate on research, including the use of new technologies and the development of new and better programs and services.



## Capital Credits Checks Coming

Your board of directors recently authorized the return of more than \$5 million in capital credits to members who had accounts from 2000 to 2020. Returning 100% of capital credits from 2000 follows the traditional cycle, and returning 4% from 2001 to 2020 will maximize the number of members receiving a check. Checks will be mailed in late October. Learn more about capital credits at [bemc.org/capital-credits](http://bemc.org/capital-credits).



# Two Options = Control + Flexibility

## PrePay Power

About one in ten members are taking advantage of PrePay Power, our pay-as-you-go payment system. Benefits include having no monthly bill, and always knowing how much you're spending on electricity. With PrePay Power you pay for power in advance of when you need it; you have control over your energy usage because you choose when and how much to purchase. And there are multiple, easy ways to add money to your account any time of day or night - through the free SmartHub app, by calling the automated payment system, or at a Bill Payment Terminal.



You'll receive email alerts when your account balance reaches a certain level, which you preset, with a link to a payment portal for your convenience. Using SmartHub you can check your current account status anytime and view, in

a layout of your choosing, your energy consumption by hour, day, week, and month.

PrePay Power gives you freedom from a monthly bill, the means to become a



smarter energy consumer, and the ability to know exactly how much you are spending on electricity in real time. To learn more and to sign up, call (800) 842-5871 or stop by one of our offices.

## The Time-of-Use rate option

Time-of-Use (TOU) rate option offers you a lower rate for electricity when demand on our system is low, balanced with a higher rate when demand on our system is high. You save money by shifting your energy consumption to times when demand is low. It's easier than you might think.

There's a three-hour window on weekdays during the winter, and a four-hour window on weekdays during the summer, when you should avoid using high wattage appliances and adjust your thermostat. We recommend installing a



timer on your water heater and adding a programmable thermostat to your HVAC system to maximize success with this rate option.

By shifting your energy use from the hours of 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. weekdays in the winter, and from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. weekdays in the summer, you'll lower your bill because you'll pay a lower rate than our standard rate all other times, and a much lower rate from 10 p.m. to 5 a.m. all year-round.

Consider joining the members who chose the TOU rate option and are saving money. To find out more about how you can lower your bill, call (800) 842-5871 or visit [bemc.org/time-of-use](http://bemc.org/time-of-use).



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